

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A pad support for a beverage maker, comprising a bottom ~~(14,64)~~ forming a barrier for beverage liquid flowing from a supported pad ~~(18)~~, a discharge opening ~~(19)~~ in said bottom ~~(14,64)~~ for discharging beverage liquid through said bottom ~~(14,64)~~, and a nozzle ~~(22,72)~~ restricting said discharge opening ~~(19)~~ for generating a beverage liquid jet from said nozzle ~~(22,72)~~, and a plurality of pad support projections ~~(16,17)~~ comprising an innermost plurality ~~(17)~~ of said support projections projecting from said bottom ~~(14,64)~~ at positions circumferentially distributed around said discharge opening ~~(19)~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein, seen in top plan view towards said bottom ~~(14,64)~~, at least some from among said innermost plurality of support projections ~~(17)~~ have a cross-section that is elongate in a radial direction with

respect to said discharge opening ~~(19)~~, and wherein said cross-section has a length in a radial direction with respect to said discharge opening and has a largest width located radially between a middle of said length in a radial direction with respect to said discharge opening and an outer end of said length.

Claim 2 (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 1, wherein said elongate cross-sections each have an innermost end ~~(23)~~ and an outermost end ~~(24)~~, the innermost end ~~(23)~~ being sharper than the outermost end ~~(24)~~.

4. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 1, wherein neighboring ones from among said innermost plurality of support projections ~~(17)~~ have straight wall portions ~~(25, 26)~~ facing each other, thus bounding a passage ~~(27, 77)~~ between said neighboring projections ~~(17)~~ having a width which is constant or decreases in radial direction towards said discharge opening ~~(19)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 1, wherein said cross-sections elongate in a radial direction with respect to said discharge opening ~~(19)~~ are wing or droplet-shaped.

6. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 1, wherein distal ends of said support projections define a support bed ~~(30)~~ for supporting said pad ~~(18)~~, wherein said bottom ~~(14;64)~~ has an outermost circumference ~~(29)~~, and wherein the distance between said bottom ~~(14;64)~~ and said support bed ~~(30)~~ increases in radial directions towards said discharge opening ~~(19)~~ at least in a ring-shaped portion ~~(28)~~ of said bottom ~~(14;64)~~ surrounding said discharge opening and radially and inwardly spaced away from said outermost circumference ~~(29)~~.

7. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 6, wherein, in said ring-shaped portion ~~(28)~~ of said bottom ~~(14;64)~~, said bottom slopes more steeply than in bottom portions radially outside said ring-shaped bottom portion ~~(28)~~.

8. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 6,

wherein said innermost plurality of support projections ~~(17)~~ project from said ring-shaped bottom portion ~~(28)~~.

9. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 6, wherein, in said ring-shaped portion ~~(28)~~ of said bottom ~~(14;64)~~ surrounding said discharge opening ~~(19)~~, said bottom ~~(14;64)~~ slopes more steeply than in bottom portions between said ring-shaped portion ~~(28)~~ and said discharge opening ~~(19)~~.

10. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 6, wherein said bottom ~~(14;64)~~ has a flat portion ~~(31;81)~~ between said ring-shaped portion ~~(28)~~ and said discharge opening ~~(19)~~.

11. (Currently Amended) A The pad support according to claim 1, wherein the discharge opening ~~(19)~~ has a sharp upstream separation edge ~~(34)~~ forming a transition from said bottom ~~(14; 64)~~ to said discharge opening ~~(19)~~ for causing a separation of beverage liquid from the discharge opening ~~(19)~~ as the beverage liquid flows into the discharge opening ~~(19)~~.

12. (Currently Amended) A foam unit comprising ~~a~~ the pad support ~~(15;65)~~ according to claim 1 and a buffer reservoir ~~(36)~~ positioned downstream of the nozzle ~~(22)~~ for retaining a buffer quantity of beverage liquid such that, in operation, beverage liquid is jetted from the nozzle ~~(22)~~ into the buffer quantity of beverage liquid.

13. (Currently Amended) A beverage maker comprising: a water heating and feeding structure ~~(45-47)~~ communicating with a brewing chamber ~~(13)~~ for feeding hot water under pressure towards said brewing chamber ~~(13)~~; ~~a~~ the foam unit according to claim 12; and a beverage dispensing passage communicating with said buffer reservoir ~~(36)~~, wherein the pad support ~~(15;65)~~ bounds a bottom side of said brewing chamber ~~(13)~~.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing a beverage with a foam layer, comprising steps of forcing water through a granulate or powder upstream of a filter wall of a pad ~~(18)~~ and of receiving the beverage from the pad ~~(18)~~ using ~~a~~ the pad support ~~(15;65)~~ according to claim 1, the beverage liquid flow being such that a

laminar flow pattern is obtained in an area directly upstream of  
said discharge opening ~~(19)~~.